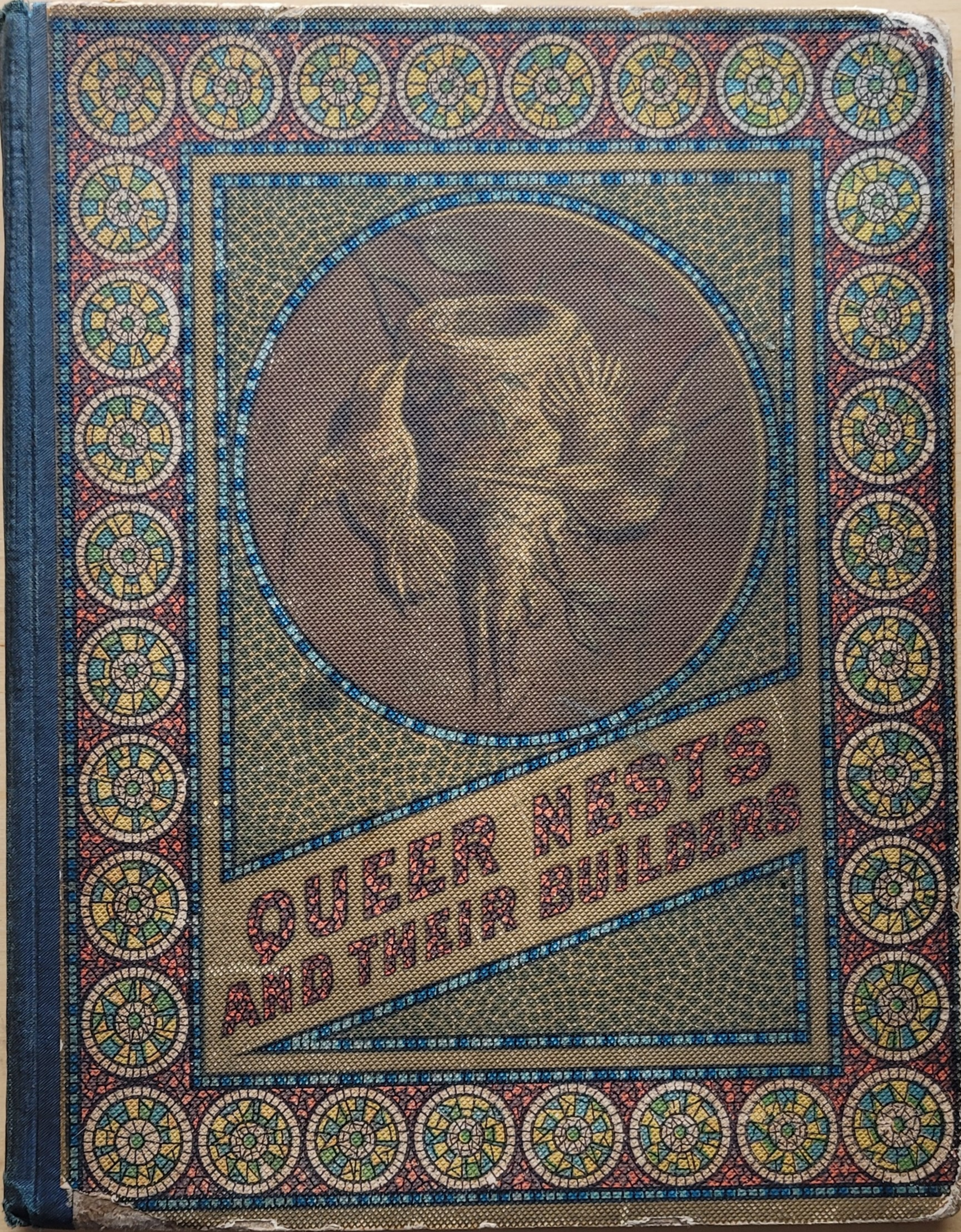
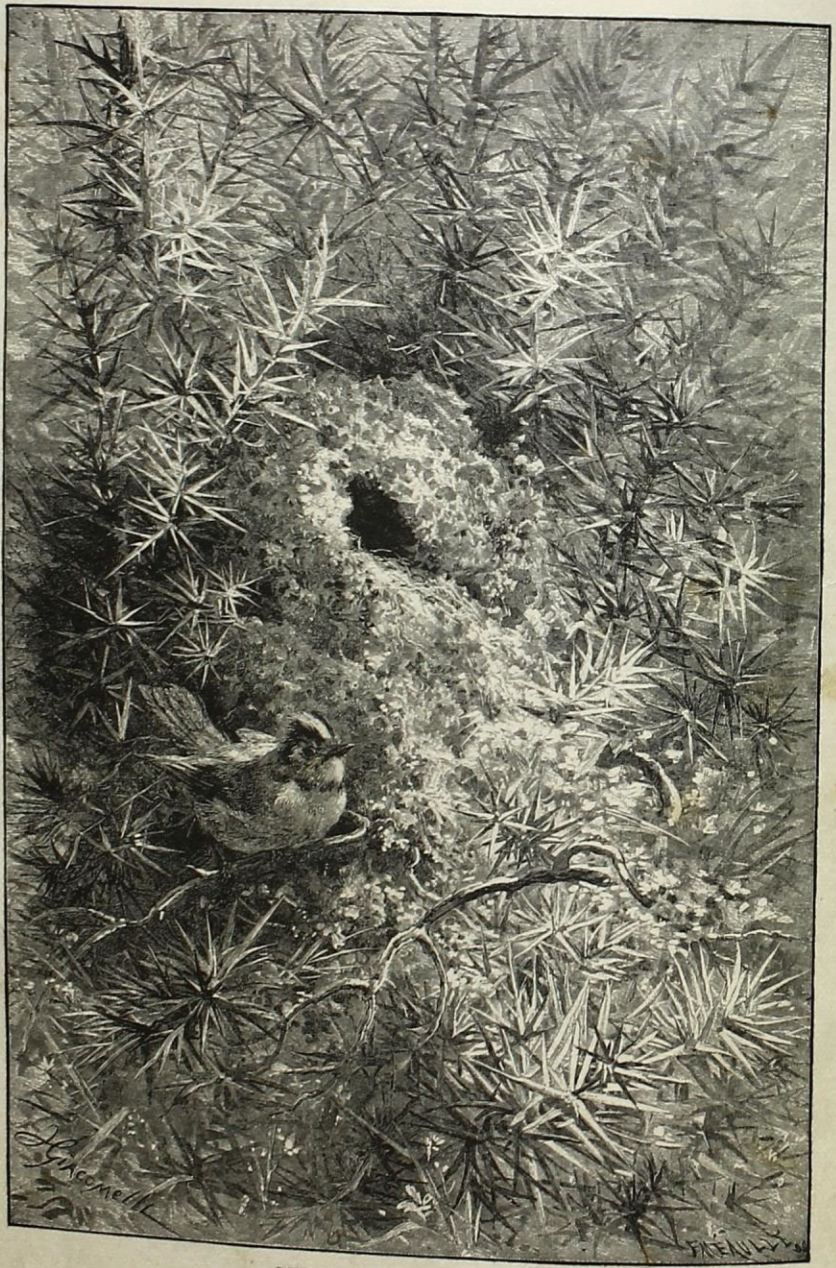

QUEEN
AND THEIR

L. A. Barnes.



LOOK AT ME AND MY NEST!

QUEER NESTS AND THEIR BUILDERS

BY

MRS. FANNIE A. DEANE

Author of "Little Talks About Plants," "Sea Shore Chats and Beach Stories."

A WEAVER BIRD AND HER NEST.

BOSTON

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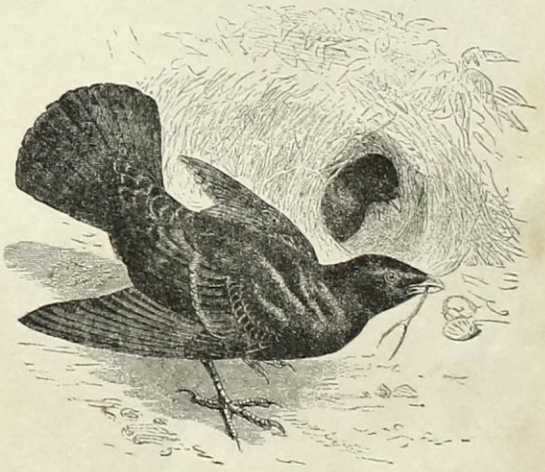
THE BOWER BIRDS.

These birds are called Bower Birds, because they build such wonderful and pretty little bowers. These bowers are not nests, they are playhouses. They are built on the ground, in some secluded place, under the trees.

The birds first weave a platform of sticks, and on the centre of this platform the bower is built. The bower itself is also formed of sticks and twigs. These are so woven that the ends of the sticks are outside. This is so that the birds can pass through the bower easily.



THE SATIN BOWER BIRD.

Having built their bower, the birds next proceed to ornament it. This they do by bringing the blue tail-feathers of the lory parrot, which the parrot has dropped in the woods; snail shells; bright pebbles; bits of bone that are bleached white; bits of gay cloth, if they can find any. If you lived in Australia (where these birds live), and should carelessly leave your thimble, or a bit of bright ribbon near the door, a bower bird might take it to ornament his nest. A bower bird has been known to steal a stone tomahawk and an old tobacco-pipe.

Some of the feathers are stuck in among the twigs; the other things are strewed about the entrance. And when finished there is nothing prettier or more curious, in all that land of curious things.

As I said, these bowers are playhouses. Their real nests are in the trees. The bower birds gather about these bowers, and run through and around them, calling to each other, chattering and skipping about like a party of children.

A BIRD AND ITS BOWER.

These bowers last for years, and the birds must be busy and tireless workers, for sometimes a half-bushel of pebbles, shells, and other ornaments may be seen at the entrance of one of them.

It is said that if the native Australian misses anything, he searches the runs of these birds for the missing article.

The plumage of the adult male Satin Bower Bird is a very glossy satin-like purple, though the young birds and adult females are olive-green.

The Satin Bower Bird is said to bear confinement very well. They do not build nests and breed in captivity, but they build their bowers. They may be seen fastening the twigs and adorning the entrances, every now and then running through the bower with a curious loud, full cry that always draws the attention of the passer-by.

THE ROBIN'S NEST IN THE GLUE-POT.

Hugh Graham lived in one of the beautiful country towns of England. He early began the business of life. From the time he was twelve years old, he made, or helped to make furniture, and a glue-pot always stood on his table ready for use.

When he was thirty years old a war broke out in Europe, and Arthur Wellesley went from England to fight against Napoleon I. Soon a message came to Hugh from over the Channel. His sister had lost her soldier-husband in the war, and wanted him to come to Germany and stay with her and her little children. So he packed up his goods and left them with a neighbor until he should come back. But he forgot to pack the glue-pot.

THE NEST IN THE GLUE-POT.

"Faithful old friend!" he said when he found it. "I'll tie you up in the old cherry-tree here, and may nobody take you down till Wellesley comes back conqueror." Then he went away.

It seemed that year as though there were more birds than ever

in England. Do you think the noise of the great guns on th other side of the channel frightened them away? The Englis robin sometimes found her old nesting-place stolen by these strang birds.

One day, a robin flying about here and there, looking for place to build, espied the glue-pot in the cherry-tree and sh began to sing:

> What a funny old nest fastened up in a tree!
> But 'twill be a fine place for my birdlings and me.

So she built her nest and hatched her birdlings, and there wer merry times in the old glue-pot. Every year thereafter for thre years, there was a nest of birds in the glue-pot, and when Hug came back with his sister and fatherless Carl and Fritz, they saw the pretty sight.

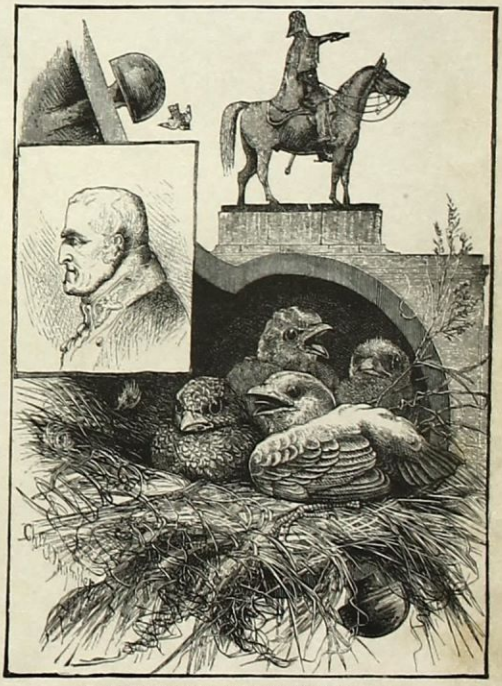
Hugh had his wish too. For Wellesley came back victor. H had conquered Napoleon I., and the title of *Duke of Wellington* was given to him for his bravery.

THE NEST IN THE WELLINGTON STATUE.

In the last nest paper, you learned that when Arthur Wellesley came back to England after the battle of Waterloo, he was made Duke of Wellington. He was also made a minister of state to the king. Perhaps you do not know what that means, so I will tell you.

A learned man, named Bacon, once said that ministers were "eyes, ears and hands" to kings. They assist the king in the affairs of his kingdom.

Wellington was a famous man, and there have been many portraits of him painted, and many statues of him made. One statue of him on horseback stood for a long time at Hyde Park Corner, London.



THE STARLING'S NEST IN THE ELBOW.

In 1884, this statue was taken down to be placed elsewhere. The head was first taken down, and what do you think they found inside the Duke's cocked hat, and resting on his head? Surely, you would never guess it was a starling's nest! but it was — a perfect little nest of twigs.

Mother Starling had come in and out through an opening under the great iron plumes of the hat.

The next thing to come down was the body of the Duke. This weighed six tons and had been fastened to the iron horse with screws. In the big elbow of the left arm was found another starling's nest, with a family of full-fledged birds in it. They flew away that very night. In the right arm was a sparrow's nest, with one tiny bird and several eggs. So you see these birds had managed to make a very good bird-house out of the iron Duke.

The starling is a lively bird, often to be seen in great flocks, thousands of them in a flock; ckuckling, chirping, whistling, and chattering about nobody knows what. But I suppose *they* know.

THE OWL AND THE WOODPECKER.

NESTS OF THE OWL AND THE WOODPECKER.

You, wise little people, will want to learn something about this "wise" bird, the owl. It *looks* wise, with its big round eyes, but I do not suppose it is any wiser than other birds.

This little "screech owl," or "barn owl," in the picture, is pale buff in color. It nests in holes in old buildings and in trees. It does not build much of a nest, however. The young owls look like white, downy puff-balls.

This little owl is sometimes known as the "feathered cat" because it catches so many mice. It lives on mice, and bats, and beetles. The owl's feathers are so soft and downy that its flight is noiseless. It pounces upon the mouse suddenly and the little creature has not time to get away.

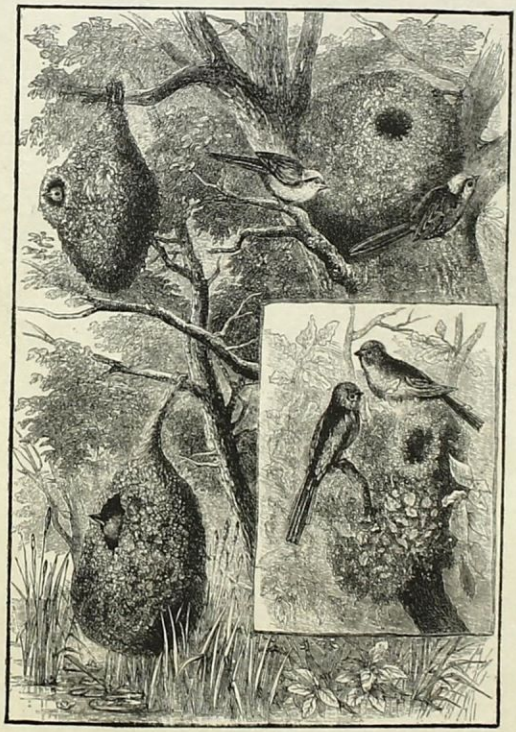
Once upon a time, a man was going through his field, when he saw a young owl lying in the path. He picked it up, and the mother bird who was near by, flew at his face, and struck him

so violently with her wing, that he lost the sight of one of his eyes. So you see, it is not quite safe to rob an owl's nest.

The woodpecker, too, nests in holes. But the woodpecker pecks out his own hole, while the owl takes one ready made. The woodpecker finds a decayed branch of a tree, and pecks away till a hole is made, deep enough and big enough to get into. She, too, does not make much of a nest. She lays her eggs on the chips at the bottom of the hole. Long before the young birds can fly, they creep out of the hole, and run about on the bark of the tree, just as Mamma Woodpecker does.

The woodpecker is a useful bird. He eats the insects that destroy the trees. He has a long sharp tongue, made on purpose to catch insects with. You can often hear in the woods the sound of his drumming.

TITMICE AND THEIR NESTS.



NESTS OF THE TITMOUSE.

You have already heard something about the blue titmouse, and its nest in the bottle on the wall, but there are many other beautiful birds of the same family.

Perhaps you have heard of the old saying, "Fine feathers make fine birds." This saying is not true in regard to titmice, for they have beautiful plumage, but are not very kind to other birds. Why, only think! they peck holes in other birds' eggs, and if they see a weak little bird, they will strike it on the head and kill it, and make a feast of it. Shall we call them "cannibal" birds?

The long-tailed titmouse builds a very pretty nest of moss and the delicate web of the spider, and when it is complete, covers it with lichens, so that it may look like the bark of the tree, to which it is attached. There is always a hole made at the top of the nest, but sometimes you will see a hole in the lower part of the nest. Perhaps the birds at the bottom of the nest

like a window as well as those at the top. Who knows? I have heard that when it is cold weather, each one tries to get in the middle of the nest at night, because it is warmer there. What a lively time in the nest until each one gets settled! Sometimes the nest hangs from the branch of a tree.

There are but two kinds of titmice in the United States. One of them, you must have seen, but you do not call it by that name. It wears a black cap on its head, and you are glad to see it come, for then you know winter sports will begin. Are you guessing? Yes, my black-eyed "Little Man," you are right. It *is* the "Chickadee."

A QUEER LITTLE HOUSE.

CARL lives in California. One day he was walking slowly along, looking on the ground. He was planning a new kite. Suddenly a little bit of ground opened in front of him. A lid was lifted up; a spider put out its head.

"Oh!" cried Carl. Then the spider took in his head and shut the door. Carl looked all around over the ground. He could not find a trace of the spider. He got down on his hands and knees and looked, but he found nothing. That night he told his papa about it all.

"It was a trap-door spider, and that was his house," said papa.

A few days after, papa and Carl went to look for it. They searched a long time, and at last found it. The spider was not at home. They dug the nest carefully out of the ground. Carl sent it to me by express. Here it lies on my table. I wish all you little men and women could see it.

THE HOUSE

It is very wonderful. It is a tube nearly a foot long. The outside of the tube is rough and brown like the earth. The inside is purest white, and soft as silk. The lining is woven of fine threads. But the most wonderful part of the nest is the door. This door is nearly round, and has a hinge. It shuts perfectly tight. When the spider has finished making his door he scatters dirt upon it.

Then the outside of the door is just the color of the ground. That is the reason it is so difficult to find it.

That day when Mr. Spider heard Carl coming, he lifted his door just to see who it was. Then he shut it in a great fright. He held on to the silk lining with his hind claws with all his might.

That is the way he does when he does not want visitors. He *never* wants boy visitors. He generally walks out at night to get his provisions. The grocer and marketman do not call at his door. He eats bugs and beetles.

The trap-door spider lives in Australia and Jamaica, and in Italy too.

THE BEARDED WREN AND WATER WAGTAIL.

The bearded wren is so called because it has a feathery ruff about its neck and head. There are about fifty kinds of wrens. The best known of these is the house wren.

NESTS OF THE BEARDED WREN AND WATER WAGTAIL.

All the wrens build very beautiful nests, out of leaves, moss, grass, and lichens. All their nests are dome-shaped, with the opening at one side, so the eggs and young birds are always sheltered from storms. If a wren finds a hole in a decayed tree, or a place under the eaves fit for a nest, he is not so particular about the dome, and it is much more slightly made. They often build in queer places. A wren has been known to build in a sleeve of a coat, which the farmer had hung in the shed. Another little wren built her nest in a pump, going in and out through the spout! and there she raised her tiny family.

The wren is a loud, sweet singer.

The wagtail is an English bird, not found in America. It is

so called from its habit of jerking its tail while running on the ground. The water wagtail, as its name implies, has it haunts by the waterside. It lives on aquatic insects, and it also catches minnows and other tiny fish when they approach too near the shore. The wagtails are handsome birds, with long pointed wings, and a long narrow tail. They are also sweet singers.

A WARM AND COSEY NEST.

The builder of this nest is a bumble-bee, and he is called a moss bumble-bee, because he builds his nest of moss. When a bird builds a nest, he carries his bits of straw and wool in his beak. But the bumble-bee does not take his bit of moss in his mouth and fly away with it to his nest; he pushes it along on the ground.

Three or four bumble-bees always work together. One of them takes a bit of moss in her mouth, shakes it with her forefeet, passes it on to her next pair of feet, then seizes it with her hind feet and pushes it towards the nest.

The second bumble-bee does the same, and then the third, and so on, till they have pushed the moss to the nest. Then they break it into bits with their mouths and stick it on.

The nest is lined with a sticky substance as thick as paper. This keeps out the rain. If you should take up a nest of the moss bumble-bee, you would see that it looks quite like a bird's nest bottom side up.

There is a winding entrance to the nest, and a bee always stands at the door, to keep out ants and field-mice, who like to eat the cocoons or eggs. You know a soldier who keeps guard is called a sentinel. So this bee is called the sentinel-bee.

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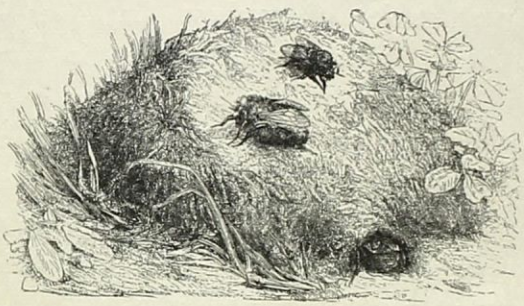

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EDIBLE BIRDS' NESTS.

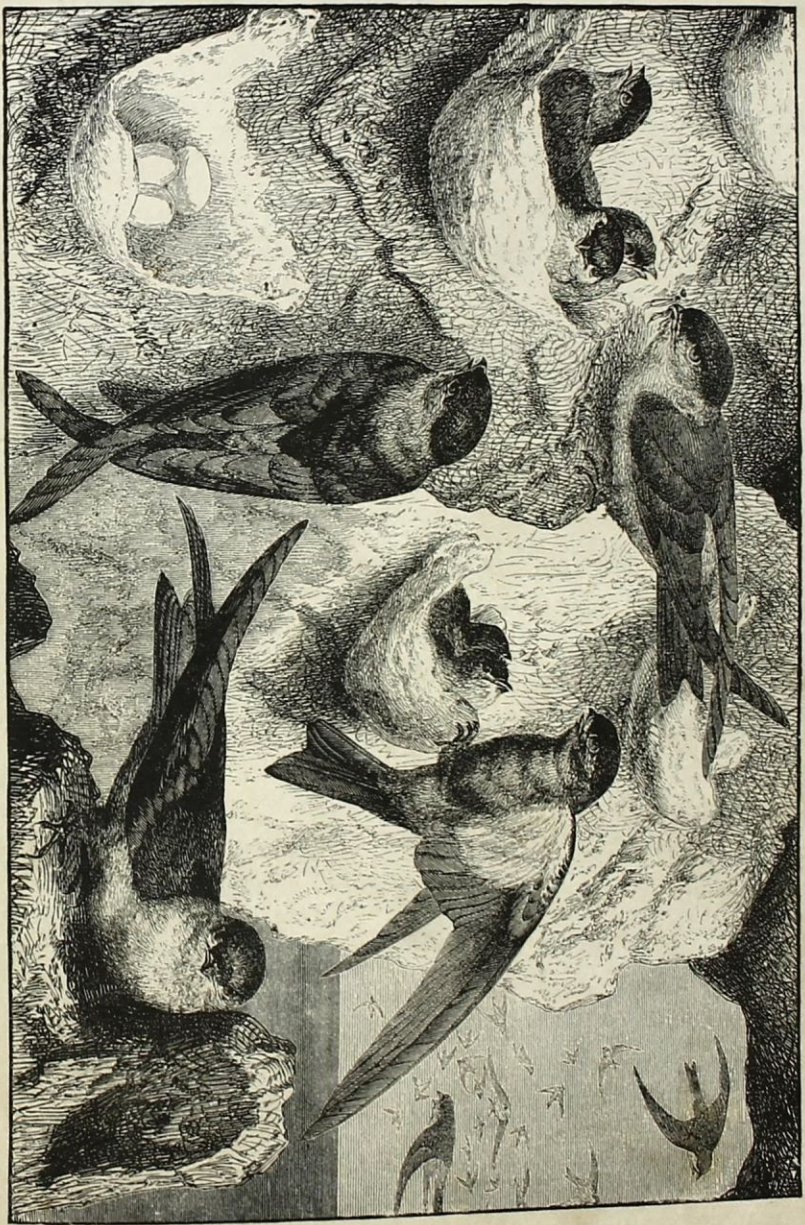
These nests are made by a species of swallow that lives in Borneo and the Philipine Islands, and in great numbers in Java.

These swallows build on the walls of the tremendous caves that abound in Java. These caves open out of immense precipices, and have the waters of the ocean for a floor. The men who collect these nests are lowered by ropes down the face of the precipice to the entrance of the cave. It is dangerous work, for the men have to walk on narrow and slippery places where a misstep is almost sure death.

Perhaps you have heard that the Chinese eat birds' nests. And you have looked at the robins' and swallows' nests, and wondered how anybody could eat birds' nests. But these nests are not made of straw, and mud, and fern wool, and such like things. They are made from a kind of gelatine which comes from the great glands in the stomach of the swallow. When new and fresh the nests are white like white bees' wax. These new white nests are worth their weight in silver. The old nests are brown and are of small value.

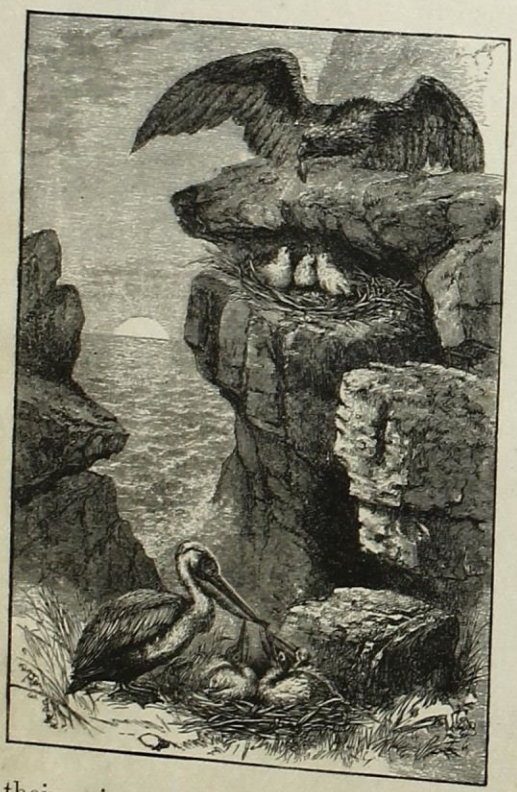
The Chinese regard these nests as a great delicacy and a fine soup is made out of them.

The Esculent swallow himself is a small bird, brown on the upper part of his body, and white beneath. The extremity of the tail is grayish white. The nest is fastened to the rock by the same substance of which it is made. It is shallow in shape like half an eggshell cut the long way. The birds lay two or three eggs of a sparkling white.



EDIBLE BIRDS' NESTS.

NESTS OF THE GOLDEN EAGLE AND THE PELICAN.



Once upon a time there were three little birds in one nest. This nest was not lined with soft wool, like the humming-bird's nest. Neither was it in a sheltered spot, like the nest of the sparrow. It was on a high rock, where the storms beat upon it, and it was made of sticks.

These birds were young eagles, and they did not mind the storms. The eagle mother brought them fish to eat, which she had caught herself. She brought them little lambs too. They grew up big and strong. When their wings were spread, they measured nine feet across!

The feathers on the head and neck of these eagles were gold color, so they were called Golden Eagles. They could fly far beyond the clouds, till they were only a speck in the sky. But even then, so keen was their sight, they could see the fish in the sea. One of them lived to be a hundred years old.

There was another nest, in a sheltered spot by a lake. This

nest was built of grass and weeds, and in it were four baby-birds. Their plumage was white, with a rosy flush, and the feathers on their breasts were gold color; their yellow bills were tipped with red.

Each bird had a big bag under its bill. The mother-pelican brought their food in her bag. She could fish too. But she did not bring one fish at a time. She came home with her bag stuffed full. The pelican is large. When its wings are spread it measures twelve feet.

THE HORNET'S NEST.

THE HORNET'S NEST.

"Do clear up your work-basket, Mary. It looks like a hornet's nest," said Mary's mamma.

Being an obedient little girl, Mary did as mamma bade her, but her mother's remark set her thinking in this way: "In my reading-book at school, I read that the hornet's nest is built regularly, in an orderly way, of cells having six sides. Now my basket was *not* in order." So she asked her mother to explain what she meant.

Her mother answered: "When a hornet's nest is disturbed, the hornets fly about in all directions; and the articles in your basket were scattered about in every way."

Then she told her some interesting things about hornets which I will tell you.

The hornet lives on insects, is especially fond of flies, eats flesh, and ripe, sweet fruits. He also robs the bee of its honey. In New England he is called "yellow jacket." Yellow Jacket

is a fierce fellow and stings whenever he can get a chance at anybody. The nest of some South American hornets, when cleared of their cells, are used as baskets; they are strong and tight, and, at the same time, they are light.

The hornet was the first paper maker. He knew how to make his paper house long before man knew how to make paper. Each hornet has a paper-mill within him. *His* paper is made from the fibres of wood. Just how it is made, I suppose nobody knows. But the woody fibre is changed into a soft pulp which forms the brown paper of which his nest is made. It takes a large number of hornets to build a nest, as one can make only a little paper.

QUEER NESTING-PLACES.

THE CRYSTAL NEST IN CHERRY-BLOSSOM TIME.

The blue tit-mouse is an English bird. It is called bluetit, tomtit, bluebonnet, bluecap, and billy-biter.

Perhaps they call it billy-biter because it bites boys' hands when too near its nest.

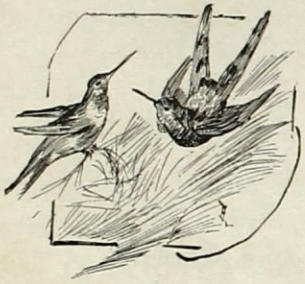
But one pair of birds outwitted the boys. While flying about in search of a place to build one day, they espied a bottle on the wall. "This is the very place," said Bluecap to his wife, Bluebonnet. "We will build in this bottle. No boys will ever think of looking here."

So they built their nest and hatched their eggs, and raised ten birdies. The bottle was fifteen inches high, and the neck was only one inch wide, and a lovely crystal nest it was in cherry-blossom time.

A pair of German birds had their nursery in a hollow sphere, near the top of a summer-house. Every minute in the day seven gaping mouths were stretched out of the hole in one side. And dear me! how did the mother ever fill those seven gaping mouths!

THE GERMAN BIRDS' NURSERY.

THE HUMMING-BIRDS AND THEIR NESTS.



HUMMING-BIRDS.

Have you ever seen the Ruby-throat and its pretty nest made of buff fern-wool and covered on the outside with green and gray lichens? Did you know, that as the birds grow, the parent-birds build the nest higher? The Ruby-throat is the only humming-bird that comes as far north as New England, and they are said to venture even as far as Labrador. Its nest is the size of an English walnut, and when the birds are first hatched they are no bigger than the common honey-bee. Humming-birds are found only in the Western Hemisphere. Their home is mostly in the tropics where flowers abound, and where it is always summer. The Spangled Coquette lives in Guiana. The male bird is a beautiful creature. The tuft on his head is brownish red, and the long feathers of his collarette are red tipped with brilliant green. He can raise and lower these feathers as he likes. The eagle humming-bird is a native of Bogota. All colors of the rainbow are seen in the plumage

EAGLE HUMMING-BIRD.

of these birds, and they flash through the air like bright jewels.

The tongue of the humming-bird is in two parts or tubes, which are separated at the tip, and the ends are formed like spoons. With this tongue it sips the honey from the flowers and also catches minute insects, just as you would take up a bit of coal with the tongs.

THE SPANGLED COQUETTE AND ITS NEST.

The humming-bird is sometimes an umbrella-maker. A lover of birds watched a humming-bird once in a shower. She picked off a leaf and fastened it to a twig so as to entirely protect her nest from the rain. Humming-birds can be tamed. A sick lady living in California amused herself by taming a pair. She first filled some flowers with honey, and then fastened them to a tree branch. The birds came, and ate of the honey, and after a while learned to take it from her hand. But, remember, if you wish to try it, that it takes a long time and much patience to tame any wild creature.

The humming-bird is swift in flight, and, with its quickly moving wings, it makes the humming sound which gives to it its name. The Indian name for the humming-bird is "Living Sunbeam."

FISHES THAT BUILD NESTS.

RARELY have birds built in a droller place than these who have built their nest in this old shoe. They are like the old woman who "lived in a shoe." Just look at it a moment before we talk about the nests of the fishes.

Summer has come, and some of you are living near ponds and brooks; some of you by the sea. You can watch the fish as they dart about in the water; but if you should look all day, you might not find the wonderful nests some of these fish build.

"Fishes build nests!" you exclaim.

Yes, indeed; just as truly as birds do; and the most perfect nest of all is the nest of the stickleback. This fish is found in the shoal waters of the East River, in creeks on Long Island, and in many other parts of the world. He is a great fighter, and will attack fish five times his size. The stickleback is a beautiful fish, and never so beautiful as just after a hard fight, when he has beaten. Then his back glows with a shining green, his sides and head are brilliant gold and scarlet, while his belly is silvery white. But if he is beaten, his bright colors fade, and he looks dull, indeed.

The sticklebacks fight together over their nests, for a stickleback will not allow another to come near his nest. This nest is built of twigs, leaves and grass. After these are woven together, the stickleback swims round and round them, and, if you were near enough, you would see that he was winding about the nest a thread-like substance from his body. This substance keeps the nest in shape.

A STICKLEBACK'S NEST.

After the eggs are laid, the male stickleback guards them, and at the same time moves his fins; this motion causes a current of water to flow over the eggs. After the eggs are hatched, he carefully guards the little fish. If one of them strays from the nest, he takes it in his mouth, just as a cat does her kitten, and carries it back.

LOOK AT ME AND MY NEST!

Presented to
Charles Thomas Barnes
by his Aunt
Mary Ann Tolles
Dec 25 1886